

Salida Community Profile

Salida is one of Colorado's best places to live, work and play. Its relatively mild climate, spectacular mountain views and quick access to 14ers and the Arkansas River means that "vacation feeling" is as close as the weekend.



Photo by Scott Peterson

Once a hub for railroads, ranchers and miners, Salida's economic driver today is tourism. Thousands of visitors each year soak up the area's hot springs, whitewater rafting, mountain climbing, snow skiing and RV'ing adventures. They also seek out the arts and culture of Salida's National Historic District and certified Creative District filled with art galleries, fine dining, local libations, specialty boutiques and more. Festivals throughout the spring, summer and fall also attract lovers of wine, beer, arts and music.

As the county seat, Salida is the hub of local government and social services. It is home base to Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center and an educational system that links high school students and adults to Colorado Mountain College.

Many consider Salida to be the crossroads of central Colorado, where the Continental Divide is only 25 miles away, and where North and South diverge to create the "Banana Belt" of the Arkansas River Valley.

The Heart of the Rockies Chamber of Commerce works to support our business community and provide information for visitors. For more information about Salida or Chaffee County, please visit our website, www.salidachamber.org, or call 719-539-2068.

Business/Economic Growth

Whether you consider moving your business to Salida or establishing a new start-up, it makes perfect sense to locate in the heart of Colorado.

Salida, along with neighboring Buena Vista, Nathrop and Poncha Springs, offers a wide variety of benefits for businesses. Affordable office lease rates, low crime, short commutes and state-of-the-art fiber, wireless and telecommunication technology. Not to mention unparalleled recreational opportunities. Where else can you and your staff bicycle to work, kayak at lunch and ski 30 minutes from the office?

Chaffee County offers an impressive array of resources to support your business growth and success, including strong local banks, real estate offices and title companies. For more information, visit www.salidachamber.org/salida-business-resources

Central Mountain Small Business Development Center

The Colorado SBDC Network service-centers provide free one-on-one counseling services in the areas of business research and marketing, new business feasibility analysis, business plan preparation, finance packaging and other small business topics. <https://centralsbdc.org>

Chaffee County Visitors Bureau

The Chaffee County Visitors Bureau mission is to maximize marketing dollars for the common goal of attracting visitors, therefore advancing the economic impact for businesses that rely on tourism for revenue. www.colorfulcolorado.com

Chaffee County Economic Development Corp.

The CCEDC functions as a liaison with government and provides end-to-end support to businesses wherever possible, including developing plans and strategies to ensure that Chaffee County remains “Open for Business.” Workforce Development, job creation, and advocacy for businesses and their needs such as workforce housing in Chaffee County are the primary mission of the corporation. www.chaffeecountyedc.com

Colorado Workforce Center

Employers get assistance with recruitment of workers, pre-screening and referral services, tax credits, and training reimbursement. Job-seekers can obtain career counseling and training. www.connectingcolorado.com

Salida Business Alliance

The Salida Business Alliance works together in a united approach to enhance the business districts and strengthen the community and economy. Cooperative marketing efforts, networking, sharing business resources, and fostering working relationships benefit the economic growth of small business in Salida. www.salidabusinessalliance.org

Upper Arkansas Area Development Corp.

The UAADC provides gap financing in concert with bank financing, and provides direct financing (without a bank) up to \$100,000 to applicants unable to obtain all the financing necessary for their needs from a bank. www.uaacog.com/programs/businessloanfund.html

Banks/Financial Services: www.salidachamber.org/category/financial

Associations/Nonprofits: www.salidachamber.org/category/associations-non-profits

Salida Chamber of Commerce’s current membership:

www.salidachamber.org/chamber-member-categories

Transportation

Salida could be considered the crossroads of Central Colorado, where two of Colorado's major highway corridors intersect. U.S. Highway 50 is a major east-west route, and Highway 285 is a major north-south route. Both highways connect to the interstate highway system.

Denver is a 2.5-hour drive from Salida, and Colorado Springs is a 2-hour drive. Salida has the geographic advantage of being located on the Rocky Mountain's eastern slope, making access to the Front Range much easier in winter than having to cross the Continental Divide.

Airports: Private air service at Salida's Harriet Alexander Field and Buena Vista's Central Colorado Regional Airport. Salida is 166 miles from Denver International Airport and 106 miles from the Colorado Springs Airport.

Bus: www.RideBustang.com for daily bus travel to and from Denver

Local Shuttle Service: The Chaffee Shuttle 719-530-8980 or 719-530-0223

Local Taxi Service: Rocky Mountain Taxi Service 719-966-2005

Taxes

Colorado:	2.9%
Salida:	3.0%
Chaffee County:	2.75%
Total Sales Tax = 8.65%	

Housing/Real Estate

As in many communities around Colorado, real estate and housing costs have increased exponentially with community growth. In Salida and Chaffee County, a number of new subdivisions are under construction and in the planning stages. Local officials and interested parties are exploring possibilities for tiny home communities, affordable rentals and low-income housing. www.salidachamber.org/relocating-to-salida



Photo by Scott Peterson

Even though real estate costs have risen in previous years, a wide diversity of options are available, from historic Victorians to new subdivisions, rural ranches to contemporary mountain living.

Average rent: \$1,366

Median home price: \$492,500

(source: First Colorado Land Office)

www.salidachamber.org/category/real-estateappraisers

www.salidachamber.org/category/real-estateappraisers/title-companies

www.salidachamber.org/category/buildingcontractorsconstructionengineers/contractors-general

And www.salidachamber.org/category/lodging/property-management

Education

Excelling in both academics and athletics, the Salida Community proudly supports their K12 Educational System. Since 2013, The Colorado Department of Education has recognized The Salida School District R-32-J as a District of Distinction. In recent years, Salida has produced more Boettcher Scholars than any other district in the state. In 2021, The Salida Boys Cross Country Team earned a 2nd place finish in the 3A State Competition. To learn more about the Spartans, please visit their website: www.salidaschools.com.

Likewise, Salida is proud to be the newest addition to the Colorado Mountain College System. Voting to annex in 2019 because of the college's unique expertise in equipping Colorado mountain communities' workforces, Salida is proud to partner with CMC to specifically meet the needs of Chaffee County's expanding economy. With a focus on outdoor recreation, health care, construction trades, tourism and hospitality; high school students can enroll in college-credit classes tuition-free. Additionally, older students can benefit from lower in-district fees. For more information, visit: www.coloradomtn.edu/campuses/salida

Salida is transforming into The Education Community. From our active non-profits to our city government, Salida is a village truly dedicated to educating its children. Salida's preschool program, Head Start, Boys and Girls Clubs of Chaffee County, Chaffee County Montessori School, TLC Christian School, Salida Creativity Lab, Salida Public Library, Chaffee County Mentors, Salida Museum, Family and Youth Initiatives, and Wellness U highlight some of the incredible work happening in Chaffee County.

Healthcare/Wellness

For a small community, Salida is big on health and wellness. Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center is a nonprofit Critical Access Hospital and Level IV Trauma Center. Established in 1885 as the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Hospital for railroad employees and their families, today's HRRMC is a publicly owned, community focused medical center offering extensive diagnostic capabilities, surgical treatment and rehabilitation services. www.hrrmc.com

Salida's senior citizens have access to numerous organizations, agencies and businesses that provide everything from in-home assistance to the Area Agency on Aging, which helps seniors coordinate services. www.chaffeeresources.com

Salida's medical and wellness specialties cover a wide spectrum, from dentists, dermatologists, chiropractors and mental health professionals, to nutritionists, yoga instructors and physical therapists. There's also Planned Parenthood, Salida Pregnancy Resource Center, Chaffee County Public Health and Salida Clinic.

<https://salidachamber.org/category/health-medical>



Photo by Scott Peterson

Arts/Creative District/Music

In 2012, Colorado's governor designated Salida as a certified Creative District for its dozens of artist-owned studios and galleries, restaurants, specialty boutiques, coffee shops, breweries and distilleries. Architectural gems from the early 20th century comprise Salida's downtown Historic District. These original buildings that once housed lumber companies and saloons have become home to fine dining establishments, a boutique hotel, toy stores, art galleries, coffee shops, spas and retail shopping.

Salida owes its vibrancy as an artsy tourist destination to a small community of artists who settled here in the 1990s following the decline of the railroad and mining industries. As the economic downturn drove away retailers, artists transformed empty storefronts into spacious art studios and galleries. Art lovers will find endless styles of painting, sculpture, pottery, wearable art, photography, jewelry, metal works and wood works in downtown Salida and beyond.

Music is another important aspect of Salida's culture. Live music is part of daily life throughout Salida's restaurants, bars, outdoor patios, parks and even sidewalk benches. In downtown Salida, Riverside Park is the perfect venue for music and arts festivals all summer long and the SteamPlant Event Center presents concerts, films, theater and other entertainers year-round.

Check it all out at www.salidachamber.org/arts-culture
And www.salidachamber.org/category/art-culture-entertainment-events-theatre

Recreation

For outdoor enthusiasts, Salida is a dream come true. The Arkansas River flows through downtown Salida giving anglers direct access to the 102 miles of Gold Medal Waters where trophy-size trout thrive.

Nearly 80 percent of Chaffee County is comprised of public lands that provide countless trails and 14,000-foot mountains to explore and conquer. It's a paradise for hiking, biking and off-roading, and also offers quiet solitude for RV'ing and camping. We also have ziplining, dog sledding, horseback riding, rock-hounding, mountain biking, historic walking tours and even a Salida Circus.

Salida's FIBArk festival (First in Boating on the Arkansas) began June 19, 1949, when six boats raced down the Arkansas River from Salida to Cañon City. Each June, FIBArk attracts thousands of whitewater competitors and spectators to the popular boat races, and a long weekend of celebrating includes live music, foot and bicycle races, a carnival and specialty foods and libations.

In winter, nearby Monarch Mountain ski resort offers 100-percent, all-natural snow for snow skiing and tubing only 25 minutes from Salida.

Staying active is easy in town, too, with 6 public parks and playgrounds, Loyal Duke Dog Park, Salida Golf Club, Salida Hot Springs Aquatic Center, miniature golf, climbing gym, a bowling center, gyms, fitness and yoga studios, and numerous classes and sports leagues for youth and adults, ranging from soccer to pickleball.

Find the resources and links to join the fun at
www.salidachamber.org/category/recreation
And www.salidachamber.org/camping-rv-parks

Get Involved

There are many ways to get involved in the Salida community. Check out churches, service organizations, mountain trail-building organizations, the humane society, roller derby, conservation groups, lecture series, heritage and preservation groups, Salida

Climate

Salida averages 262 sunny days, 10 inches of rain and 39 inches of snow per year. (source: www.bestplaces.net)

Check out Salida's average monthly highs, lows and moisture levels at

www.weather.com

For current weather and road conditions, visit www.CoTrip.org

Museum, fraternal organizations and much, much more at www.salidachamber.org/churches-salida-colorado
And www.salidachamber.org/category/associations-non-profits
You can also visit the new volunteer website, created by the Chaffee County Community Foundation (CCCF)
to help match volunteers with opportunities at www.viachaffee.org

Government

City of Salida

www.cityofsalida.com 719-539-4555, Offices at the Touber Building, 448 E. First St., Salida

Administration, Airport, Animal Control, Building Permits, Business Licenses, Community Development, Dog Park, Event Permits, Fire Department, Golf Course, Housing Authority, Municipal Court, Police, Public Works, Recreation and Aquatic Center, Recycling, Sales Tax License, Salida Utilities (water/sewer), SteamPlant Event Center, Water and Wastewater Treatment Department.

Chaffee County

www.chaffeecounty.org 719-539-2218

Offices at the Chaffee County Administrative Building, 104 Crestone Ave., Salida & Touber Building, 448 E. First St., Salida.

Airport, Assessor, Building, Chaffee County Combined Courts, County Clerk and Recorder, Colorado State University Extension, Coroner, County Administration, County Treasurer, County Commissioners, Development, Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services, Environmental Health, Fairgrounds, Finance and Human Resources, Housing, Human Services, Landfill, Motor Vehicle Registration, Planning and Zoning, Public Health, Road and Health, Sheriff, Veterans Services, Weed Control.

State & Federal Representatives

www.colorado.gov

Governor Jared Polis

State Senator Alex Valdez, Senate District 5

State Representative Ron Hanks, House District 60

U.S. Senator John Hickenlooper

U.S. Senator Michael Bennet

U.S. House Representative Doug Lamborn,
5th Congressional District

Quick Links

- Salida Utilities/Water/Sewer

www.cityofsalida.com/departments/salida-utilities
719-530-2622

- Natural Gas

Atmos www.AtmosEnergy.com 888-286-6700

- Electricity

Xcel www.XcelEnergy.com 800-895-4999

Sangre de Cristo Electric Association

www.MyElectric.Coop 719-395-2412

- Propane

DeLuca Gas www.DeLucaGas.com 719-539-6402



Photo by Nik and Angel

- Trash Services

Chaffee County Waste www.tellercountywaste.com 719-395-6656

Shamrock Disposal www.ShamrockDisposalServices.com 719-239-4854

Waste Management Inc. of Salida www.WM.com/us/en/location/co/salida 719-539-6911

- Post Office 310 D Street 719-539-2548

- Laundromat 1410 E Street, Salida

- Recycling options visit www.salidachamber.org/sustainable-salida

- Dump Stations

Poncha Springs Visitor Center, Intersection of Hwy. 50 and Hwy. 285. Open year-round.

High Valley Center, 719-539-6089 (April-October)

- Cell Phone/TV/Internet Services

Century Link (internet/Direct TV/phone) www.GetCenturyLink.com 719-313-1070 or 1-865-465-2321

Spectrum Business (internet/ TV/phone/mobile/home or business) Residential Requests 833-267-6094;

Local Business Contact richard.utiger@charter.com

Verizon/Russell Cellular (phone) www.RussellCellular.com 719-539-6784

AT&T/Spring Mobile (phone) www.att.com 719-539-5009

Wal-Mart (phones and prepaid phone cards) www.Walmart.com 719-539-3566

Colorado Central Telecom (fiber optic/wireless internet/phone) www.ColoradoCentralTelecom.com
719-937-7700

Hilltop Broadband (fiber optic/wireless internet/phone) www.hilltop-broadband.com 970-344-9541



Photo by Scott Peterson

History

For thousands of years, this Rocky Mountain region was the Ute Indians' hunting grounds and summer residence. Spanish explorers came in the 1400s, and on Christmas Eve 1806, Zebulon M. Pike, of Pike's Peak fame, recorded that his starving expedition was thankful to discover bison while camping just north of Salida.

Everything changed after the Colorado Gold Rush of 1859. Gold rushes and boom towns exploded across Colorado and the Utes were removed to reservations in the 1870s. Stagecoach stops at Cleora (just east of Salida) and present-day Poncha Springs were on the route to the gold camps, and ranches sprang up to sell beef to miners and railroad workers.

In May 1880 the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad's narrow-gauge rails reached Salida. The tent city soon gave way to sturdy wooden saloons, hotels, restaurants, mercantile shops and homes. When fires in 1886 and 1888 destroyed downtown, city officials required new construction to be built of brick. That decision ultimately preserved 111 turn-of-the-century buildings that now comprise Salida's Downtown Historic District. Many people worldwide came to Colorado to seek their fortunes. Salida became Sister Cities with Lago, Italy, in 2014 to celebrate the many Lago immigrants who contributed significantly to the local culture.

As highway travel became increasingly popular after World War II, Salida's rail employee numbers dropped from 500 to 50. Local mine closures brought more economic decline in the 1980s and '90s.

The economic downturn might have been the catalyst that invigorated Salida in the 1990s as artists began moving into the affordable, downtown storefronts and setting up art studios and galleries.

Artists, property owners and preservationists worked with the city to rebrand Salida as a thriving cultural center and regional arts destination. They transformed downtown into a family-friendly area with a whitewater park, visitor parking, public restrooms and Riverside Park, a popular venue for outdoor music, festivals and events.

Outdoor recreation continues to thrill locals and visitors who come here to fish, climb Fourteeners and snow ski. And FIBArk (First In Boating on the Arkansas), which began in 1949, attracts thousands of spectators and competitors to the annual whitewater races.

Several old buildings have been repurposed into hubs of activity. The 1885 railroad hospital, now the Toubert Building, houses City Hall. And the steam-powered electric plant built in 1892 is now the SteamPlant Event Center, an anchor for the arts community and Salida's Creative District. Its WiFi and high-tech amenities accommodate business conferences and workshops as well as concerts, films and art exhibits.

Salida's relaxed zoning for the Central Business District permits a large variety of uses for existing structures. For example, a boutique shop might be located below a residential dwelling and adjacent to a restaurant. This variety of uses helps



Photo by Lori Roberts

maintain vitality with a mix of residential, retail, office and entertainment coexisting as neighbors.

There's no better place than Salida to blend colorful history with modern innovation and creativity while building a future with unlimited possibilities. Come be a part of Salida history!